

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (TEXT PARA 2. CORRECTED)

E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: PINT, CA
SUBJ: TRUDEAU ON CAMPAIGN TRAIL IN ALBERTA

1. PRIME MINISTER TRUDEAU AND DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER
MACEACHEN VISITED ALBERTA MARCH 9-10 AS PART OF WHAT THE
MEDIA DESCRIBED AS PRE-ELECTION TOUR OF THE WEST. ON
MARCH 9 PRIME MINISTER RECEIVED ENTHUSIASTIC RECEPTION IN
EDMONTON WHERE, BEFORE CAPACITY CROWD OF 4,500 HE SELF-
CONFIDENTLY FIELDLED QUESTIONS FROM FOUR-MAN CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE PANEL AND GENERAL PUBLIC ON ECONOMIC PROBLEMS AND
HANDLED SPORADIC HECKLING WITH WIT AND APLOMB. TRUDEAU S
EXCELLENT PLATFORM PERFORMANCE EVOKED AN ENTHUSIASM AND
EXCITEMENT THAT SOME OBSERVERS DESCRIBE AS A "RESURGENCE
OF TRUDEAUMANIA". ON MARCH 10 FOLLOWING BRIEF STOP AT
FORT MCMURRAY, TRUDEAU MADE PUBLIC APPEARANCE IN CALGARY.
AT UNIVERSITY QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION, PRIME MINISTER
OUTLINED HIS VISION OF THE FRENCH FACT AND STATUS OF QUEBEC
IN CANADA AND DEFENDED GOVERNMENT S ECONOMIC POLICIES. OF
INTEREST WAS TRUDEAU S ANSWER TO STUDENT S QUESTION ON
NATIVE LAND CLAIMS, I.E., "THERE COULD BE A NATURAL AREA
THAT COULD BE DEFINED ALONG CERTAIN SOCIAL OR RATIONAL LINES
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IF THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES ARE TO BE FURTHER DIVIDED"
CLEARLY IN HIS ELEMENT, THE PM DREW CHEERS AND APPLAUSE
FROM THE VAST MAJORITY OF THE STUDENT AUDIENCE. MACEACHEN
MEANWHILE, MET WITH LIBERAL PARTY LEADERS AND OILMEN. A
REPORT OF HIS MEETING WITH THE INDEPENDENT PETROLEUM
ASSOCIATION OF CANADA WILL FOLLOW BY SEPTTEL.

2. COMMENT: TRUDEAU S ALBERTA VISIT WAS CONSIDERED HERE
AS A HARBINGER OF AN EARLY ELECTION -- A CHANCE TO ELIMINATE
SOME OF THE BUGS IN THE LIBERAL ORGANIZATION AND THE
OPPORTUNITY TO TEST OUT POSSIBLE 1978 CAMPAIGN THEMES.
PROVINCIAL LIBERAL PARTY CHIEF TOLD CONGEN THAT HE EXPECTED
PRIME MINISTER TO CALL AN ELECTION FOLLOWING APRIL 14-15
LIBERAL PARTY LEADERSHIP CONVENTION IN QUEBEC. TRUDEAU
HAS MADE OTHER EQUALLY IMPRESSIVE FORAYS INTO ALBERTA
WITHOUT REALIZING MEASURABLE SUCCESS FOR HIS PARTY AT THE
POLLS.
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